

**MINUTES  
REGULAR CITY COUNCIL MEETING  
CITY OF GREY FOREST, TEXAS  
GREY FOREST COMMUNITY CENTER  
18249 SHERWOOD TRAIL  
HELOTES, TX 78023  
February 22, 2022, 6:30 PM**

**I. CALL TO ORDER**

Mayor Charles M. Thornton Jr. called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

**II. ROLL CALL**

Mayor Charles M. Thornton Jr., Mayor Pro Tem Geri Poss, Council Member Jennifer Nottingham, Council Member Sean Skaggs, Council Member Susan Darst, and Council Member Kimberly Verity.

Staff Present: City Secretary Miguel Cantu, Chief of Police Rene Rodriguez, City Attorney Sonya Herrera, Assistant to the City Secretary Nichole Heinrich, SGT Scott Ristow, Officer Raymond Yee, and Grey Forest Utilities CEO Jeff English

**III. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND INVOCATION**

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**IV. PRESENTATIONS BY CITIZENS AND VISITORS**

Ms. Madeline McCloskey requested to address the City Council regarding the playground at the Grey Forest Community Center Park. Ms. McCloskey stated she wished to know what she needed to do to move forward with the construction of the playground approved at the October 26, 2021 City Council meeting. Ms. McCloskey explained that the project had been stopped several times and commented on the construction of the playground equipment and how they were working to conform to playground construction standards.

Mrs. Laura Chaffee and on behalf of her husband Mr. John Chaffee requested to address the City Council regarding the playground at the Grey Forest Community Center Park. Mrs. Chaffee wanted to understand why the playground was approved for installation without the professional assistance now required.

Mrs. Jill Sulac requested to address the City Council regarding the L'Tape San Antonio Tour through the City of Grey Forest. Mrs. Sulac was speaking in favor of the bike ride through the city. She added that this type of event was to inspire people to live happy and healthy lifestyles.

Mrs. Barbara Breazeale requested to address the City Council regarding the Police Department and the Grey Forest Community Center Park playground. Mrs. Breazeale thanked the Grey Forest Police Department. Additionally, she stated that at approximately 30 years ago a company was going to donate the colorful playground to the city and it was denied because of liability issues. Mrs. Breazeale spoke in favor of the playground because it provided children and families a place to meet and hangout.

**V. ANNOUNCEMENTS / REPORTS / MAYOR AND CITY EMPLOYEES**

**a) Mayor Announcements**

**1) Financials**

**2) Budget Quarterly Update**

Mayor Thornton presented the future financials and January 2022 Check Details and an

overview of the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Budget Quarterly Update. City Secretary Miguel Cantu informed City Council regarding changes made to the financials to provide the City Council and the public with transparency as requested.

**b) Council/Staff Announcements:** City Council Member Skaggs provided an update regarding the recent overflow of the Grey Forest Community Center septic system and repairs that were currently underway. Additionally, it was found that the septic system could not be in Bexar County Records. He projected that the repairs would be completed by March 2022.

**c) Committee Announcements/Reports:** None

**d) Grey Forest Community Board Update:** Ms. Madeline McCloskey thanked the Public Works Department for installing the insulation to the storage room at the community center, Mr. John Chafee for adding a fence-like cover to the air conditioning, and Mayor Thornton and Council Member Skaggs for their work on the septic system.

**e) Senator Frank L. Madla Natural Area Update:** Council Member Nottingham reported to City Council the update for February had been provided at the February 8, 2022 Special City Council meeting. Additionally, Council Member Nottingham informed the public that there was caution tape at the park because park visitors were in the meadows that is restricted from the public.

**f) Board of Adjustment Update:** None

**g) Police Department Monthly Report:** Chief Rodriguez reviewed the Police Department report for February 2022. Officer Raymond Yee presented a grant review associated with the Police Department. In FY 21 the Police Department was awarded \$86,000 for the purchase of a police vehicle, 14 sets of soft body armor, four X26P tasers, 30 taser cartridges, and 2 sets of building breaching equipment. In the FY22 the Police Department was awarded \$52,670.38 for the purchase of a 2022 Ford F-150 Police Interceptor (\$4,228.38) with a remaining balance of \$4,228.38 that was undetermined for use. Additionally, Officer Yee informed City Council that for the FY23 he would be requesting \$118,532.5 for a 2023 Explorer Police Interceptor, upgrade to vehicle video systems, electronic Ticket Writer system, extra tires for patrol vehicles, additional breach equipment, tasers, and training.

**h) Public Works Monthly Report:** Mayor Thornton reported Public Works had been chipping throughout the city and assisting with the Grey Forest Community Center septic system.

**i) Fire Department Monthly Report:** Bexar County Emergency Services District 8 Firefighter Engineer Bryant Bigham provided a report for City Council's review. City Council Member Nottingham asked why there was a response time of 5 to 8 minutes. Firefighter Bigham responded that they were possibly at a training or at a distance getting something to eat. Additionally, he added that they still had quite a few firefighters deployed at Del Rio.

**j) Grey Forest Utilities Update:** Grey Forest Utilities CEO Jeff English reported to City Council the utility company recently went through their annual budget and are doing well; including almost reaching 18,000 customers.

## VI. PUBLIC HEARING

a) None

THE FOLLOWING ITEMS MAY BE CONSIDERED AT ANY TIME DURING THE REGULAR COUNCIL MEETING:

## VII. CONSENT AGENDA

a) **Approval of Minutes:** No minutes presented. NO ACTION.

## VIII. NEW BUSINESS

a) **Presentation: L'Etape San Antonio Tour through the City of Grey Forest (Dennis Smith).**

L'Etape CEO Michael Brown and representative of L'Etape Mr. Dennis Smith, presented to City Council. Mr. Brown informed City Council that the organization was an experience



like the Tour de France providing an amateur cycling series designed to make a cyclist feel like a true Tour de France champion. The race or ride in a course was designed by Tour de France experts, winding through Texas neighborhoods and off into Hill Country. The presentation included an explanation that the bike race would have on the City of Grey Forest to include closing of Scenic Loop Road between the hours of 11:00 am to 2:00 p.m. Mr. Brown stated that communication was key to make this event successful and would inform the community with more details at a later date.

- b) Discuss and take possible action on Ordinance 2022-02-13, an ordinance of the City of Grey Forest, Texas amending the City Code of Ordinances Chapter 3 Building Regulations, section 3.01.002 fences, trees, etc., adjacent to street to add line of sight regulations to ensure public safety; providing a cumulative clause, a severability clause, and an effective date.**

Council Member Verity stated that she felt that the ordinance was unattainable because it did not appear that it would be an ordinance that could be enforced because there are so many curves in the city. She asked if the current fences would be grandfathered. Mayor Thornton responded that the current fences at the corners would be grandfathered. Additionally Council Member Verity asked if the existing fence stay as they are but when the fence needs to be repaired or changed, then the ordinance would go into effect. Mayor Thornton added that leaving the fences on the corners forces a slow in traffic and requested the City Attorney draft the line of sight ordinance and present it to City Council. Council Member Verity stated that she would like to figure out how the presented ordinance would affect the city aesthetically. Mayor Thornton called for a motion.

MOTION WAS MADE BY COUNCIL MEMBER VERITY TO POSTPONE ORDINANCE 2022-02-13 TO THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING, AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF GREY FOREST, TEXAS AMENDING THE CITY CODE OF ORDINANCES CHAPTER 3 BUILDING REGULATIONS, SECTION 3.01.002 FENCES, TREES, ETC., ADJACENT TO STREET TO ADD LINE OF SIGHT REGULATIONS TO ENSURE PUBLIC SAFETY; PROVIDING A CUMULATIVE CLAUSE, A SEVERABILITY CLAUSE, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE. COUNCIL MEMBER NOTTINGHAM SECONDED THE MOTION. COUNCIL VOTED 5-0.

- c) Discussion on amending the Subdivision Ordinance regarding the potential change to a lot size up to 5 acres**

Council Member Nottingham corrected the agenda item that she was asking for no less than five acres rather than up to 5 acres because there is a 150-acre land for sale across from City Hall. She added that this would then result in lesser homes and less congestion on Scenic Loop Road. Mayor Thornton announced he was a huge property rights advocate. Council Member Verity stated that she agreed with Mayor Thornton. She felt that City Council is starting to create ordinances when there appears to be an immediate situation and later to find it hinders on property owners' ability to any construction on their land. Council Member Skaggs expressed his concern that the City would provide water services to the properties in the ETJ. Mayor Thornton reminded City Council that the ordinance specifically states that the City will only provide water to those that reside within the city limits. Council Member Nottingham asked how many of the 150 acres were located within the city limits. Mayor Thornton responded that there was approximately less than 10 acres. Council Member Verity stated that there might be another way to restrict the property by looking outside the subdivision ordinance.

Mayor Thornton directed Mr. Cantu to find out the number of acres located in the city limits of the City of Grey Forest. Mayor Thornton then directed the City Attorney Herrera to provide the City Council with the definition of a subdivision, new development, and platting.

- d) Discussion regarding the process of Demolition Permit(s) and Ordinances related to and holding a workshop.**



Mayor Pro Tem Poss stated that she was aware of a recent demolition and asked if the property owners had a demolition permit. Additionally, she asked if the permit would require seeing if the utilities were shut off before the demolition occurred. Additionally, she stated that the ordinance addressed that the demolition ordinance was in regard to a state of disrepair and not an elective demolition. Council Member Nottingham asked resident Susan Bevins to speak on her findings. Ms. Bevins stated that the demolition permit stated that the permit must go to the Board of Adjustment. Mr. Cantu informed City Council that the only time the Board of Adjustment would become involved is if an extension of the permit was requested by the property owner. Council Member Skaggs stated that once a demolition permit is issued then the property owner would be responsible for the disconnection of the utilities. The owner would have to work with Grey Forest Utilities for gas, CPS Energy for electricity, and these conditions are also addressed in the building code. Council Member Darst stated that the permit should have triggered the Building Inspector to check to make sure that there was no asbestos that needed to be remediated and other items require to demolish a home. Council Member Nottingham stated recently a 1930's home was demolished and feels that the city should inform the resident that the home is historical. Council Member Darst stated that discussing the historical value would not be in the purview of the City Council and would be more of a function of a welcoming committee. Mayor Pro Tem Poss agreed that it would not be a function of the city to stop the demolition just because someone believed a home was historical. Additionally, Mayor Pro Tem Poss stated that it doesn't stop the Grey Forest Community Center from educating the people regarding the historical homes. Council Member Darst stated there was once a program that did provide education regarding Grey Forest history. City Council discussed how to be informed when a demolition permit was issued. They considered that an email could be sent to Council Member Nottingham or all the City Council or place the demolition permit on the website. City Attorney Herrera stated that she would be more comfortable with having a general announcement on the website welcoming residents to the City of Grey Forest and where they could find more information about the historical nature of the city. She added that sending an email to the City Council member may be crossing a line. Attorney Herrera informed City Council that when it comes to issues like this, we need to put on our city hats and not our personal hats because we want to protect the city and its perception. Mayor Thornton stated that the city requires a permit, and nothing changes regarding this agenda item. Mayor Thornton then moved to the next City Council agenda item.

**e) Discussion regarding the Board of Adjustments.**

Council Member Verity stated that her request to have this discussion was not necessarily regarding the Board of Adjustment, but more so about the ordinance that specifies the lot size limits for different building permits. She was glad to see that there is a new Compliance Officer, and he seems very enthusiastic about his role and thinks he'll be great. She also felt that the Board of Adjustment met to discuss a home on Scenic Loop Road regarding a variance to the side of the home and the property owners added to the front of the home. She said that the owners were out of compliance. Mr. Cantu stated that the city did receive the application regarding the variance with the plans. The City Inspector reviewed the plans and did not find any issues regarding the addition to the front of the home. Council Member Verity stated that that property owner could not add to the footprint of a home with less than 0.75 acres. In fact, the Building Inspector stated that a building could be added on to a structure that is less than three quarters of an acre so if it was not a new structure. Council Member Verity stated that she understands that Mr. Cantu could do a workshop with the members of the Board of Adjustments. Mayor Thornton stated that the review of the plans is completed by the Building Inspector. Council Member Nottingham asked is city staff could hold a class with the Board of Adjustments regarding their responsibilities. Mr. Cantu stated that he was planning on holding a public education regarding the Board of Adjustment and



also use this as a recruitment tool.

#### IX. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

a) **Discussion regarding pending City Council topics:**

- 1) **Website:** Mayor Thornton reported that the website might be up in March or April.
- 2) **Road Repair: Mayor Thornton reported Public Works were making repairs throughout the city.** Additionally, he had requested Mr. Cantu to look into Federal Infrastructure grant funds. He also contacted City Engineer David Givler to find out if any plans have been made for a bridge on Sherwood Trail between City Hall and the Grey Forest Community Center.
- 3) **Mailbox area cover design-** Mayor Thornton stated that there were several plans/ideas, one would be to use the cedar post, or to go with 4x4 metal posts and first make a metal structure with a metal roof. After the metal structure was created then the city could look at making it look more rustic. Council Member Verity stated that she would be interested in assisting with the plans. Mayor Thornton concluded that there would be lighting added under the cover.

#### X. EXECUTIVE SESSION

The City Council of the City of Grey Forest convened in Executive Session at 8:43 p.m. in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Section 551.071 (consultation with legal counsel).

- a) **City Council will receive legal consultation regarding the Playground Phase I pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with legal counsel).**
- b) **City Council will receive legal consultation regarding the City of Grey Forest Legal Issues regarding Organizational Chart I pursuant to Texas Government Code Section 551.071 (consultation with legal counsel).**

The City Council of the City of Grey Forest reconvened in Open Session 9:22 p.m. in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, Section 551.071 (consultation with legal counsel)

**NO ACTION TAKEN.**

#### XI. GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS & FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS REQUESTED

- a) Council Member Nottingham requested to place on the next City Council agenda Madla Board of Directors recommendation for a City Council liaison for the next year.

#### XII. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION WAS MADE BY MAYOR PRO TEM POSS TO ADJOURN AT 9:22 P.M. COUNCIL MEMBER VERITY SECONDED THE MOTION. COUNCIL VOTED 5-0.

**PASSED AND APPROVED THIS 22<sup>ND</sup> DAY OF MARCH, 2022.**



**APPROVED:**

  
Charles Mitchell Thornton, Jr.  
Mayor

**ATTEST:**



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**Miguel Cantu, TRMC**  
**City Secretary**